REMARKS:

Dependent claims 2 and 11 have been amended to list additional types of gaming machines. These amendments are supported by the embodiments described on page 9, line 5 of the specification.

Claim 13 has been canceled and claims 14 and 15 have been amended to ensure that there is adequate support in the specification. The amendments to claims 14 and 15 are supported by the embodiments of the invention described in connection with Fig. 3 on pages 12-13 of the specification.

Responding to the § 102 section of the Office Action, the rejection of claims 1-4, 6, 8-14 and 16-17 under 35 U.S.C. 102(3) as being clearly anticipated by Rowe (U.S. Patent No. 6,394,907) is respectfully traversed. Rowe does not teach or suggest at least the following limitations of claim 1:

> (2)   a medium generator arranged to generate a medium comprising a machine-readable validation code <u>to the exclusion of a machine-readable credit amount</u>;

(C)   a central authority arranged to store the validation code and a credit amount received from the network <u>in response to generating the medium</u>, <u>arranged to validate the validation code</u> and arranged to transmit the stored credit amount through the network to the interface in response to validation of the validation code, the credit amount being displayed on the display.

More specifically, Rowe does not teach or suggest a medium generator arranged to generate a medium comprising a machine-readable validation code <u>to the exclusion</u>

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of a machine-readable credit amount. Contrary to claim 1, Rowe teaches that a machine-readable credit amount is generated on the medium. In Col. 6, lines 34-35, Rowe teaches that a "printed ticket voucher may contain information including: 1) a ticket value." Col. 6, lines 56-58 state: "A unique bar-code may be printed on the ticket voucher which may be read with a bar-code scanner to obtain information from the ticket." In Col. 12, lines 44-45, Rowe teaches that a cashless instrument may include transaction information, "including 1) a value." In Col. 13, lines 3-6 state: "when a debit card is used as the cashless instrument, the game player may be able to directly deposit the award on the debit card into a bank account...." This necessarily teaches that the value on the instrument is machine-readable and that the value is a credit amount. In Col. 13, lines 6-11, Rowe teaches:

> In 414, a validation request is sent from the cashless transaction validation site 400 to the cashless server 10. The validation request may be an information packet containing the transaction information stored on the cashless instrument in 404 and stored in the cashless server database in 408.

This statement also teaches that that the value on the instrument is machine-readable.

In summary, Rowe teaches that a machine-readable credit amount is generated on his cashless instrument. This is the opposite of the claimed feature of generating a medium comprising a machine-readable validation code to the exclusion of a machine-readable credit amount. For this reason alone claim 1 is allowable.

Rowe also does not teach or suggest a central authority arranged to store the validation code and a credit amount received from the network in response to

<u>generating the medium</u> as claimed. As described in Col. 12, lines 43-49, cashless instrument information is stored in server 100, not clearing house server 136. Server 100 is a local server that is part of local property 104 at which the instrument is generated, not a central authority as claimed. In Col. 13, lines 44-51, Rowe teaches:

> In [step] 418 [Fig. 4], when the cashless instrument was not generated locally, the cashless server may mark the validation request pending in a local database and send a request for validation to the central clearinghouse in 420. The request for validation from the cashless server 10 to the cashless instrument transaction clearinghouse 136 may contain all or some subset of the information stored on the cashless instrument being validated.

The foregoing is further evidence that Rowe does not teach a central authority arranged to store the validation code and a credit amount received from the network <u>in response to generating the medium</u> as claimed. If a validation code and credit amount had been stored in server 136, there would be no need for the request for validation to include information stored on the cashless instrument being validated. For this reason alone, claim 1 is allowable.

Rowe also does not teach a central authority arranged to validate the validation code as claimed. As shown in Fig. 4 at steps 424 and 426, the validation request is sent from central clearing house 136 to a local server 100 to determine whether the cashless instrument is valid. In Col. 14, lines 25-27, Rowe teaches that validation occurs at a local database, not a central authority as claimed:

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In 426, the cashless server 100 checks the local cashless instrument transaction database to confirm the request for validation received in 424 is valid.

In summary, Rowe teaches that validation is done at a local database, not by a central authority as claimed. Claim 1 is allowable for this reason alone.

For all the foregoing reasons, claim 1 is allowable over Rowe.

Claims 2-4, 6, and 8-9 are dependent on claim 1 and are allowable for the same reasons as claim 1. Contrary to MPEP § 707.07(g), the Examiner has offered no reason for rejection of the foregoing dependent claims and has not applied any prior art to such dependent claims. Thus, the undersigned has no reasonable basis for amending or commenting on any of the foregoing dependent claims, and they are believed to be allowable.

Claims 10-14 are analogous to claims in the group 1-4 and are allowable for the same reasons as claims 1-4. Claims 16-17 are allowable for the same reasons as claim 8-9.

The rejection of claims 7 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rowe in view of Stockdale et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,251,014; "Stockdale") is respectfully traversed. Claim 7 is dependent on claim 4 (and claim 1) and is allowable for the same reasons as claims 4 and 1. Claim 15 is dependent on claim 13 (and 10) and is allowable for the same reasons as claims 13 and 10. Claim 7 reads:

7.   (Previously Presented) A gaming system according to claim 4 wherein the central authority transmits to the interface through the network a <u>validation code</u> before a cashout signal is generated.

Stockdale does not teach or suggest transmitting a validation code. In Col. 17, line 64 through Col. 18, line 5, Stockdale teaches that only "critical events" are stored on both a peripheral controller and a master gaming controller. A validation code could not involve a "critical event" because the Examiner states that Rowe does not disclose that the central authority sends a validation code before a cashout signal is generated. If a validation code were a "critical event," Rowe could not avoid sending the validation code before a cashout signal is generated as claimed. Thus, no one skilled in the art would be motivated to combine Rowe with Stockdale, because Stockdale does not suggest transmitting a validation code, which cannot represent a "critical event." For all the foregoing reasons, claim 7 is allowable.

Claim 15 is allowable for the same reasons as claim 7.

In summary, each of claims 1-4, 6-12 and 14-17 is allowable, and such action is respectfully requested.

Date: December 19, 2003   Respectfully submitted,

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